



*Nothing is politically right  
that is morally wrong.*

**MISSOURI SENATE**  
JEFFERSON CITY

*Free and fair discussion  
is the firmest friend of truth.*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Senator Michael Gibbons and Senator Jon Dolan  
Successfully Advance Disabled Advocacy Legislation**

JEFFERSON CITY- Senate Majority Floor Leader Michael R. Gibbons, R- Kirkwood, and Senator Jon Dolan, R-Lake St. Louis, cooperated to gain Senate approval of legislation that better protects the rights of Missouri's disabled citizens and prevents against fraudulent disability claims for motor vehicle parking placards.

"Too many times a truly disabled Missourian is not able to park in a handicapped space because a healthy, but lazy individual is illegally parking in it with handicap placards that aren't warranted," Gibbons said. "This bill simply puts an end to able people cheating the system in order to gain benefits only our disabled citizens should receive."

Gibbons and Dolan say they introduced the legislation when a constituent brought the rampant problem of fraudulent disabled placards and license plates use to their attention. St. Louis area resident Dan Card says he deals with the frustration of people abusing disabled parking spots on a daily basis. Card was born disabled, but has mastered his own way of getting around with the use of special metal walking supports.

"There are a finite number of handicap parking spaces available," Card said. "Eliminating the abuse and misuse of these spaces will free up more existing parking spaces making daily life better for those of us with disabilities."

SB 1144 updates and clarifies the qualifications for obtaining disabled license plates while tripling the penalties for people who abuse the use of handicap plates and placards.

"Before, these types of offenses were punished by a mere slap on the wrist," Dolan said. "Increasing these crimes three-fold is the first step to curtailing these cases of fraudulent use."

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The measure increases the crimes of illegally obtaining or using a disabled license plate or placard from a Class C misdemeanor to a Class A misdemeanor, it also increases the penalties against a physician or health care practitioner for furnishing statements of disabilities to individuals that do not meet established conditions of disability outlined by law.

Gibbons says the bill goes even further by restricting physicians and health care practitioners from providing diagnoses which are outside the scope of their respective licenses.

“Before there was no limitation on what, say, a chiropractor or podiatrist could diagnose an individual with,” Gibbons said. “Now there will be no question because health care providers are limited to only issuing a diagnosis that falls under the area of medicine they practice.”

The bill also requires descendants of people who inherit vehicles with disabled license plates to return those plates to the Department of Revenue.

Now having cleared the Senate, the bill has only to earn passage in the House of Representatives to become law.

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